

BOOT CAMP

Building a Traditional Spread

OBJECTIVE: Students will evaluate a topic and determine whether a traditional spread is the best coverage choice by identifying the dominant story, supporting coverage opportunities and key traditional spread elements.

STEP 1: MINI-LESSON

Before watching the video, bootcamp builds on the foundational design concepts covered in the 2025 series. If your staff is new to yearbook or still learning the basics of spread design, dominant photos, headlines, captions and grid design, watch the 2025 Bootcamp videos first before completing this activity. The 2026 series focuses on selecting the best coverage approach for a topic, not teaching the basic components of a spread.

Watch the Bootcamp 2026: Traditional Spread video.

After viewing, discuss the following:

Characteristics of a Traditional Spread

- Dominant photo
- Secondary photos
- Main headline and subhead
- Traditional story package
- Supporting mods that expand coverage

Emphasize the key question from the video:

"What is the best way to tell this story?"

Explain that traditional spreads work best when:

- There is one clear main story to tell.
- Related angles can be explored through supporting mods.
- The topic requires storytelling but not extensive long-form coverage.
- A dominant package can tell the primary story while mods provide additional coverage opportunities.

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STEP 2: COVERAGE MATCH-UP

Part 1: Find Your Match (Movement Activity)

Give each pair or small group a school topic card.

Examples:

- Homecoming Week
- First Week of School
- Fall Play
- Student Section
- Spring Break Trips
- Science Fair
- Cheer Team
- Pep Rally
- Marching Band Camp

Groups move around the room and find another group whose topic could be covered similarly.

Once paired, groups discuss:

- What is the main story?
- What could be covered in supporting mods?
- What photo would make the best dominant image?

Part 2: Software Planning Challenge

Using InDesign or Yearbook 360 – Online Design, students create a quick planning mock-up.

They should:

- Place a dominant photo box
- Add spaces for secondary photos
- Write a working headline
- Add three mod package placeholders with labels
- The goal is planning coverage, not finishing a design

STEP 3: CLOSURE

Conduct a quick gallery walk and each group shares:

1. Topic
2. Why a traditional spread works
3. Dominant story
4. Three supporting mod ideas